

لا اله الا الله محمد رسول الله

THE MOSLEM SUNRISE

EDITED BY
SUFİ M. R. BENGALĒE

شمس الاسلام



Vol. V

October-January, 1932-33
(Published in March)

No. 1 and 2

A Quarterly Magazine

Annual Subscription, \$1.00 (England 5/- India Rs. 3/-)

Single Copy 25c

Founded by DR. M. M. SADIQ. Published by SUFI M. R. BENGALĒE

56 E. Congress St., Suite 1307. Chicago, Ill., U. S. Amer.

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

نَحْمَدُكَ وَنُصَلِّي عَلَى رَسُولِكَ الْكَرِيمِ

THE

Moslem Sunrise

56 E. CONGRESS ST., SUITE 1307

CHICAGO, ILL., U. S. A.

Vol. V

OCTOBER - JANUARY, 1932 - 33

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The Only Mosque With Six Minarets



*Exterior view of the Mosque of Sultan Ahmad in Constantinople.
A Masterpiece of Moslem architecture.*

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

اِذَا الَّذِيْنَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ اِسْلَاحٌ

Four Verses From the Holy Quran

(Transliteration)

1. Bala, man aslama wajha-hu lillahi, wa huwa muhsinun, falahu ajruhu inda Rabbihi wa la khaufun 'alaihim, wa la hum jahzanoon.

2. Qul, inna salatee wa nusukee wa mahyaya wa mamatee lillahi Rabbil alameen.

3. Walla dheena Qalu Rabbu-na-llahu thummastaqamoo tata nazzalu Alaihimul mala-ikatu alla takhafoo wala tah zanoo wa absheru bil jannatillatee Kuntum too-adoon. Nahnu awliya-u-kum fil hayatidduniya wa fil akhirah.

4. Wa iza sa alaka ibadee anneefa-innee qareeb; ujibu da-wata dda-ee iza da-anee Falyas ta ji bu lee wa liyuminu bee la-allahum yarshudoon.

Translation

1. Yea, whoso resigneth his self to Allah and doth good deeds, his reward is with his Lord; no fear shall come upon them, neither shall they grieve. (Chapter 11, 113).

2. Say: Verily my prayers and my sacrifices and my life and my death are for Allah, Lord of the Worlds. (Chapter VI, 163).

3. Verily those who say: Allah is our Lord and then remain faithful and steadfast, the angels of God descend upon them and say: 'Fear not nor grieve, for you is the paradise which has been promised to you. We are your guardians in this life and in the next'. (Chapter XLI, 30).

4. And when my servants ask thee concerning Me, then verily I am nigh. I hear the prayer of him who prayeth; so let them hearken unto Me and trust in Me in order that they may be rightly guided. (Chapter II, 182).

من احاديث الرسول

The Sayings of the Master Prophet Muhammad

Suhaib relates that the Holy Prophet said, "All the actions of the believer are admirable. He alone possesses the quality that in prosperity he expresses gratitude which brings more prosperity, and in adversity he shows patience, the result of which is always good." (Muslim)

Numan Ibn Basheer relates that the Holy Prophet said, "The mutual love and sympathy of the Moslems can be illustrated by the example of the different limbs of the body. When some one limb of the body is wounded, the whole body feels pain." (Bukhari)

It is related on the authority of Abu Huraira that the Holy Prophet said, "On the day of resurrection, the seven persons will be under the shadow of God; the first, the judge who is just; the second, the man who devotes his life in the worship of God even in his youth; the third, the man who eagerly awaits the call to the prayer to go to the Mosque and worship God; fourth, the two friends, who love each other for the sake of God, when they meet they meet for the sake of God, when they separate they separate for the sake of God; fifth, the man who resists the temptation of a woman who is beautiful and comes of a respectable family and tries to incline him towards her for evil purposes; the sixth, the man who gives alms with his right hand but conceals it from the left; the seventh, the man, when alone, meditates on God, and his eyes become filled with tears." (Bukhari)

Abu Huraira reports that the Holy Prophet said, "O people! do you know what backbiting is?" They replied, "God and His prophet know best." The Holy Prophet said, "Backbiting is to speak about your brother in his absence things that would hurt him if he would hear." Some one asked. "O Prophet of Allah, suppose those things are true, will they still be backbiting?" The Holy Prophet answered, "Yes, of course it is backbiting if they are true. Otherwise it will be a lie and calumny." (Muslim)

The Attributes of God

By

HAZRAT MIRZA GHULAM AHMAD

THE PROMISED MESSIAH AND MAHDI 1836-1908

We shall consider the attributes of the Almighty Being as taught by the Holy Word of God. The following are only a few examples of the treatment of this subject in the Holy Quran:

"He is God beside whom there is none who should be worshipped and obeyed" (LIX:22).

The idea of a partner with God is negated because if God had a rival, His Divinity would be liable at some time to pass wholly to His rival. Further, the words, "no one deserves to be worshipped but He," signify that He is a perfect God whose attributes, beauties and excellences are so high and exalted that if we were to select a God from among the existing things, whose selection depended upon the perfection of his attributes, or if we were to suppose certain qualities as the highest and most excellent attributes of God, nothing would approach Him in His perfection and in the excellence of His attributes. Injustice, therefore, could go no further than set up a partner or a rival with such a Being.

His next attribute, as the verse above quoted indicated is that He is "Knower of His own person". In other words, no one can comprehend His person with limited human faculties. We can comprehend everything that has been created; for instance, the sun, the moon, and so forth, in its entirety, but cannot comprehend God in His entirety. The verse then goes on to say that:

"He knows everything, and nothing lies hidden from Him."

It would be inconsistent with the idea of His Divinity that He should be ignorant of His own creation. He looks to every small particle of the universe but man cannot do this. God knows when He shall put an end to this system and bring a general destruction over all things but no one else knows this. God only is He who knows the time of the happening of all things.

"God is He who provides, out of His bountiful mercy, and not in return for anything done by the creatures, all the means of happiness for all living beings before their creation."

We see the manifestation of this attribute in God's creation of the sun, the moon and numerous other things for the benefit of men before they or their deeds ever existed. This gift of the Divine Being is due to His attribute of (Rahmaniyyat) mercy, and it is when this attribute is at work that He is called (Ar-Rahman) or the Merciful. With respect to another attribute of God He is called "the God who gives a good reward for the good deeds of His creatures and does not waste anyone's labour". Thus displayed His mercy is called (rahimiyyat) and the merciful God himself (Ar-Rahim).

Again God is described as "*the Lord of the day of judgment.*" In other words, He, Himself judges the whole world. He has not made over the dominion of earth and heavens to anybody else so as not to have any connection with His creatures, nor has He entrusted the business of judgment to any particular person who might have got the sole authority to judge the world.

God is also "*the King who is without a stain of fault or deficiency.*" The Kingdom of God is not like earthly kingdoms which may pass into other hands or cease to exist of themselves. The subjects may all emigrate to another country and thus leave the ruler without anything to rule over.

A general prevalence of famine will surely reduce the ruler to something less than a beggar. If the subjects as a body rise against the monarch and contest his superiority to rule over them, he must give up the reins of monarchy. Such is not, however, the character of the kingdom of God. He has the power to destroy the whole creation and bring new creatures into existence. Had He not been Omnipotent He should have been obliged to have recourse to injustice in His dealings with His creatures. A forgiveness and salvation of the whole of His first creation would have necessitated the injustice of sending them back to this world to be tried again, for having no power to create new souls the world should either have been left without any souls or the Almighty would have been obliged to take back the salvation which He had first granted. Either of these courses could not have been consistent with Divine perfection and, if adopted, would have placed the Divine Being on a level with imperfect earthly rulers. The laws which governments make for the

management of their affairs are always defective, and when obliged to have recourse to measures of oppression and injustice they look upon them as based upon principles of justice and equity. Temporal Governments, for instance, deem it lawful to drown a boat with its crew when it is likely to collide with a ship and, therefore, liable to cause a great loss of life and property. But it is not consistent with the idea of Divinity that God should be driven to such an extremity that the adoption of either of two defective courses should become inevitable. If, therefore, He is not Omnipotent, or has not the power to create everything from nothing, we can only liken Him unto the ruler of a petty state who must either use oppression to keep up His Divinity or, being just must be left without a world to rule over. But the God of power is free from every such defect and the mighty ship of His power floats upon the ocean of justice and equity.

The next attribute of the Divine Being is contained in His name, "*Assalam—the God of Peace*"—Who is Himself safe and secure against every defect, adversity or hardship, and provides safety and security for others. The significance of this attribute is evident; for, if He Himself had been a prey to suffering and adversity, persecuted and beaten by men, or unable to carry out His own designs, no heart would ever have looked to Him in trials and afflictions in the hope of deliverance. Thus He says of the false deities:

"Verily they on whom you call beside God could by no means create a fly though they were all assembled for that purpose; nay, were the fly to carry off aught from them, they could not take it away from it. Weak of understanding are the worshippers of these false deities and the worshipped ones themselves are destitute of all power. (Such weak things cannot be deities), but the true Deity is God, Who is more powerful than every powerful being, and the mighty one who overcomes everything, who can neither be seized nor beaten by human beings. (Such people who invoke the false deities are in error); they have not formed a worthy and true estimate of God the object of their worship" (XXII:72).

With reference to another attribute of God, He is called "*The Granter of security and the Establisher of proofs for His own unity and excellence.*" This attribute calls attention to the fact that the believer

in the true God may consider himself safe on every occasion. He is not ashamed before people because he has strong and cogent arguments in support of his assertion, nor shall he be ashamed before God. But the worshipper of a self-made deity is always in trouble. Having no proofs in his favor, he takes every foolish assertion which is contrary to reason for a deep mystery so that under that name his absurdities and errors may pass for something transcending human reason.

The verse which has partly been quoted above, then goes on to say:

"Guardian over all, overcoming every power, Mender of every breakage and Restorer of every loss, and above every need" (LIX: 23).

And again:

"He is God, the Maker of bodies, the Creator of souls, the Fashioner of the image in the womb, to whom belong all excellent titles that man can imagine." (LIX:24).

"The inhabitants of the heavenly bodies declare His sanctity and holiness as well as the inhabitants of the earth; and He is the Mighty and the Wise" (LIX:24).

This verse shows that there are inhabitants in the heavenly bodies who follow the Divine rules of guidance.

Again the Holy Quran describes God as: *"His power extends over everything."* This is the real source of comfort for the worshippers of the true God, for how could man centre all his hopes in Him if He himself was weak? Elsewhere we also have: *"The Nourisher of all the worlds, the Merciful, the Compassionate, the Lord of the DAY OF JUDGMENT, listening to supplications and answering them, the Acceptor of prayers."*

And again:

"The Ever-living and the Source of all life, the Supporter of all." God is here described as eternal and everlasting in order to exclude all notions of His death ever leaving His worshippers without a master.

"He is the one God without an equal, neither has He a son, nor is He a son, nor is there any other being of His kind."

It should be borne in mind that justice in relation to the Creator consists in being firmly established upon the true path of Divine Unity without deviating a hair's breadth from it. The moral injunctions to which I have here called attention form a part of the ethical teachings of

the Holy Quran. The most conspicuous feature of all of these teachings is a perfect freedom from excess and default. The Holy Quran does not categorise any quality as a moral quality unless it is within the proper limitations. It need not be demonstrated that virtue lies in the middle course; in other words, it is a mean between two extremes. Whatever inclines a man to the middle path and establishes him in the mean course is conducive to good morals. The man who acts on the right occasion follows the mean path which alone can lead to any good. The farmer who scatters seed upon his field either too late or too early departs, in so doing, from the middle path and the result would be a waste of seed. Virtue, truth and wisdom all lie in the middle path and he only can walk in that path who watches for the opportunity. Between two falsehoods which occupy either extreme lies the middle course, the path of truth, which can be kept only by the observance of the right occasion. As in other moral qualities, the middle path should be adhered to in the recognition of the existence of God. The mean in this consists in avoiding, on the one hand, the view of God which divests the Divine Being of every attribute, and in rejecting, on the other, the view which likens Him to things material. This is the position which the Holy Quran has taken with regard to the attributes of the Divine Being. It recognises Him as seeing, hearing, knowing, speaking, and so forth, but cautions us at the same time not to liken Him to anything which our senses can comprehend. Thus it says:

"No one participates with God in His person and attributes" (XLII:9).

"Liken Him not unto any one of His creatures" (XVI:76).

Being like unto us in some of His actions, He is yet a pure Being, such is the true conception of God. In short, Islam adopts the golden mean in all its teachings. The opening sura of the Holy Quran inculcates the adoption of the mean path when it teaches the well-known prayer:

"Guide us in the right path the path of those upon whom have been Thy blessings, not of those upon whom has been Thy wrath, nor of those who have gone astray."

In this verse three sorts of people have been mentioned. First of all, by "Those upon whom has been Thy wrath," the Holy Quran alludes to people who assume an attitude of anger against God and thus following

their own savage inclinations call down the wrath of God upon themselves. Then there are "Those who have gone astray." It refers to those people who are led astray by following their bestial inclinations and their delusions. Midway between these two extremes are the people who walk in the right (the middle) path and whom the Holy Quran denominates. In fact to direct people in the middle path is the one object of the Holy Quran. Moses laid stress upon retaliation and Jesus upon forbearance, but the Holy Quran taught the use of both in their proper places. Elsewhere in the Holy Quran we have:

"We have made you walk in the middle path and taught you the golden mean in all things" (II:137).

Blessed are they who adopt this course, for as the Arabic proverb says: *"The golden mean is the best."*

The Voice of the Soul

By

THE PROMISED MESSIAH

The following is the translation in English prose of a prayer in Arabic poetry.

O Who hath encompasseth the whole creation with bounty
I give praise unto Thee, though I possess no power to sing Thy praise.

Look at me with mercy and kindness

O my Refuge, Deliverer from sorrow.

Thou art the Refuge and Thou art our Rock of salvation.

In this world and in the world to come.

I have met with danger in the darkness

Have mercy upon me and let me alight at the abode of light.

Thou dost forgive great sin when man turns to Thee

Thou savest the necks of man from the burdens of sin.

Thou art my Desire and Thou art the object of my heart

In Thee are centered all my trust and all my hopes.

Thou hast given me the cup of love—the best of it

I have drunken the life-giving drinks—one after another.

I will die but my love will never die

From the dust of my grave, will be heard my cry with Thy remembrance.

My eyes hath not seen a Benefactor like unto Thee.
O wide in Thy Bounty and the Possessor of blessings.
Thou hast been the object of my heart
In all my writings—in every stroke of the pen.
When I perceived Thy infinite mercy and grace
All my sorrows banished and I felt no sorrow.
Verily I renounced the Self with all its desires
When it came seeking after me as a great seeker.
I accepted death the kind of death my enemy canst not see
My corpse has been removed from among the living.
Had not mercy of God come to support me
The flood of my tears would wipe me out of existence.
I follow the bright light of Truth
I like not, those who follow darkness.
My Self has been removed far away from all that is dark
I have halted my camel close to the ONE who enlightens me.
When I found that the Self stands in my way
I abandoned it as a dead body is left in the desert.
I have drunken the cups of death for guidance
After death, I found the fountain of the everlasting life.

Get your happiness out of your work or you will never know what happiness is.—Elbert Hubbard.

The prize in every attainment is a call to an attainment still higher.
—Lyman Abbott.

Appreciation is to the human soul what the rain from heaven is to the plant.—

Do the best you can where you are, and when that is accomplished, God will open a door to a higher sphere.—

It is not the wealth but the character that lasts.—Aristotle.

The great high road of human welfare lies along the old highway of steadfast well-doing; and they who are the most persistent, and work in the truest spirit, will invariably be the most successful. Success treads on the heels of every right effort.—Smiles.

There is only one real failure in life possible, and that is not to be true to the best one knows. —George Eliot.

The Prophetic Mission of Muhammad*

By SUFI M. R. BENGALÉE

We read in the Holy Quran that the great prophet Abraham offered the following prayer to God:

"O our Lord, raise up among them a Messenger from among themselves who may recite unto them Thy signs and teach them the Book of wisdom and may purify them; verily Thou art the Mighty, the Wise." (II:130)

This prayer gives us a vivid definition of a prophet's duties which is at once so brief and graphic. We learn that a prophet has to perform the following four sacred duties, namely; first, the reciting of the signs of God unto man; secondly, the teaching of the Book of God to man; thirdly, the expounding of the divine philosophy; fourthly, the purification of man.

Signs of God Reciting of the signs of God unto man has been assigned as the first duty of a prophet. The Arabic word "Ayat" which has been rendered

into English as signs, is the plural of "Aya"—a sign, a token, a mark by which a person or thing is known. It signifies that what is known by the token or by the sign cannot be known otherwise. Hence, it follows that when a prophet recites unto man the signs of God, he furnishes humanity with convincing proofs regarding such esoteric truths which man, left to himself, cannot realize. In this category, the existence of God stands foremost. In fact, the Being of God is the Only Real Being and yet so subtle, so fine and so transcendental that the realization of Him without external help is beyond the power of man. In order to attain to certainty of conviction concerning the existence of God, we stand in need of proofs, evidences and knowledge about the Supreme Being. The observation and the experience of the manifestation of the Divine attributes cast away all doubts from our minds and lead us to the actual realization. The same is the case with the angels, the Divine Messengers, the Revelation and the life after death. The extreme importance of

*This article is based on the writings of Hazrat Mirza Basiruddin Mahmood Ahmad, the Head of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam, Qadian, Panjab, India.—Ed.

the above-mentioned verities is brought home to us by the fact that these are included in the basic articles of faith in all religions.

Attributes of God The Holy Prophet, Muhammad, executed the above task in the most splendid fashion. He laid great stress on the Oneness of God, emphasising the fact the Almighty Being is free from all defects, faults and frailties. He is above all physical limitations and material needs. He is the Sole Possessor of all excellences. He is the Infinite, the Omnipotent and the Creator, and He alone is perfect in all Divine qualities. Muhammad expounded the attributes of God in such a way that the Beauty, the Glory and the Greatness of God are so powerfully impressed upon the mind of man that his spiritual hunger and the cravings of his heart are completely satisfied. Again, Muhammad established the principle that the doctrines, the belief in which is indispensable, should be based not only upon logical arguments and philosophical discussions but upon experience. So, he emphasized that the attributes of God are manifested and demonstrated in such miraculous way to those of His servants who devote their lives to the pursuit of the spiritual progress that they become imbued with the indwelling love of God and their intellectual and spiritual faculties find perfect satisfaction. This is how they come to the certainty of conviction concerning God and attain the realization of Him. Not only they, but even those who study their lives and come in contact with them can fully perceive the effects of their spiritual influence. They serve as beacon-lights to others.

Revelation and Messengers of God The Holy Prophet, Muhammad, proved the necessity for the appearance of the Divine Messengers and revelation by giving examples of the phenomena of the universe. He asserted that God made the physical sun for the physical eyes; how could it be possible for Him not to make spiritual sun and spiritual light that the spiritual eyes may perform their duties and functions. For, the physical eyes are short-lived and transitory whereas the effects of the spiritual sight last till eternity.

Angels The Holy Prophet not only repudiated the notions of those who deny the very existence of the Angels but also of those who depict them as the courtiers of a King. Muhammad maintained that the angels are as much indispensable for the physical and spiritual systems in the universe

as are other visual objects. The angels are not the splendor of the court of a corporeal God, but constitute the first links of the cosmic cable of the creation of the spiritual God. Both the physical and spiritual systems are firmly founded upon them. Just as an edifice cannot be built without a foundation, so also this cosmos could not come into existence and run without the instrumentality of the angels.

Life After Death Muhammad threw light upon the various aspects of the life after death in such a way, that, instead of being a purely scholastic subject for the discussion of the pedants, it becomes a practical problem. The good deeds of man are deserving of great compensation. This compensation, however, needs to be wrapped up in mystery. For, if the veil of mystery is lifted, man will cease to have freedom of action. If the rewards of human actions are made palpably manifest, then man in a way will lose his independence. Muhammad revealed that the life after death is not a new life, but the continuation of this earthly life. In the life to come, the human soul, freed from all physical influences, commences without any check its endless onward march which it prepared with its own doings in the course of life on earth. God is not like a monarch full of wrath and indignation. Man was created as the manifestation of the Divine attributes and it is His attributes that call for the union of man with God. Sooner or later man must reach this ultimate goal. God is all mercy. It is His mercy which prompted the creation of man. It is quite natural that man should be united with God.

The Teaching of the Book The teaching of the Book constitutes the second duty of a prophet. This consists in the commandments of God - the code of the religious law. The Holy Prophet, Muhammad, accomplished this task in a way which presents no parallel. He taught that the dispensation of the religious law is the grace and bounty of God unto man. For the betterment of his earthly life and life beyond, man needs that the will of the Lord shall be communicated to him so that the deeds performed during the unending spiritual journey for which man has been created may not be founded upon uncertainties and doubts, but upon certainty and conviction. The law is neither a burden nor a trial, nor is it a penalty. On the contrary God, out of His boundless love and mercy, revealed His

will in the form of His commandments or laws in order to warn mankind of the many pitfalls and obstructions that may impede life's eternal progress. So, these commandments help man to bring this long sojourn to a glorious and successful end. Obedience to the law does not, in the least, add to the greatness of God. They satisfy the manifold needs of man and serve for him as guides and lights.

Muhammad presented to the world a code of universal law which is suited to the various natures, capabilities and needs of all mankind. The code which does not take into consideration the diversity of human nature and the variety of human capabilities, not only blocks the roads to salvation to a large portion of mankind, but defeats the very purpose for which it is revealed.

Muhammad attached importance to a third principle with regard to the teaching of the Book or law, namely; while serving as a complete guide for humanity for its religious, moral and spiritual advancement, the Book of God should afford a wide scope for our mental development and intellectual unfoldment so that human intellect may not fall into stagnation. With these golden principles, Muhammad eradicated two stumbling blocks to real spiritual progress; first, epicureanism or libertinism which impels man to sacrifice spirituality on the altar of sensual pleasures. Secondly, the blind imitation which makes the human mind stagnant like a pool of putrid water, full of pestilential germs and totally undermines the growth of the latent powers.

The Divine Philosophy

The expounding of the divine philosophy is the third duty assigned to a Messenger of God. In this regard also, Muhammad stands alone and unexampled in the annals of the prophets. He laid great emphasis on the omnipotence of God. At the same time, he explained that omnipotence of God does not mean that He issues commandments at His caprice or pleasure like an absolute despot and an autocrat and nobody can ask the reasons underlying these commandments. If He is Almighty, He is All Mercy and All Wise too. He never reveals any commandments which are devoid of deep philosophy and thought for the welfare of mankind. The very fact that the commandments are attributed to God must be a sure guaranty that they are full of deep secrets and lofty ideals. Under this principle, the Holy Prophet, Muhammad, explained the philosophy of Islamic commandments. So the Islamic

dispensation does not seem burdensome to a Moslem and he does not feel constraint in following it. He rather feels highly inspired with ardour and pleasure in carrying out God's behests. For he knows full well that in doing so he not only does good to himself, but to the world at large. This consciousness of inward pleasure and radiant joy brings a happy change in the Moslem who considers the Divine Law as a great boon and blessing of God.

The Purification of Mankind

The purification of mankind constitutes the fourth and perhaps the most important function of the Divine prophets. This sanctification consists in bringing about a complete moral reformation and spiritual development so that man may become fit to attain to union with God, the greatest purpose of life. The Holy Prophet, Muhammad, accomplished this task so masterly that, his unparalleled success in that regard compelled admiration not only from his friends and followers, but from his foes as well.

The country in which he was born and the community of which he was a member had sunken to the lowest depths of degradation. Gross idolatry and superstitions prevailed. The Arabian people exulted in drinking, gambling and immorality. This was the condition of Arabia. The general condition of the known world was hardly better; religion fell into degeneracy and corruption and whatever teachings survived were ignored by the people. The whole world was wallowing in intellectual, moral and spiritual darkness as though night had enveloped the whole surface of the globe. It is at such a time that Muhammad came into the world and his lot was cast in the nation, which of them all, was the most degraded. He began to infuse into that nation the spirit of sanctity. As is always the case, the people of Arabia resented what was contrary to their accustomed beliefs and habits and they raised a storm of opposition against him. But undaunted, he steered his charted course with unexampled patience and perseverance. He suffered all kinds of atrocious cruelties but never for a moment did he display symptoms of vacillation. He endured all that because his life was devoted to the upliftment of humanity. At length, one by one, he began to conquer the hearts of the people. Just as a river rises from the summit of a mountain and winding through rugged rocks reaches the plain ground where it can smoothly flow; so, also, the Holy Prophet passing through the

most fiery ordeals of his career, achieved supreme success in the grand task of his life. He turned his people from a fallen and degraded nation into a harmonious, civilized and spiritual people. "Most successful," says a German scholar about Muhammad, "of all prophets and religious personalities." (Enc. Brit.—the Koran)

Islam's Attitude Towards Christianity

DR. M. M. SADIQ

The Religions which are true must be all of them fundamentally one and the same. They may be different in form, way of application, details and outward appearances, but in reality they must be based on the same principles. The Source of all true Religions is the Revelation from God, through some of His Messenger-Prophets. So, the Source being one, they are all originally one. Adoration of God and the service to Humanity are two supreme rules, which pervade all others. Muhammad of Arabia, Jesus of Nazareth, Moses of Egypt, Zoroaster of Persia, Confucius of China, Rama, Krishna and Buddha of India — all belong to the same class and they all have had the same platform for their teachings and preachings. Every Prophet has been giving to the world a right guidance for the life, but as man is naturally a changer and distorter of things, nothing remains with him in its genuine and original form for a long time. Even a worldly house requires a spring-cleaning each year. Hence the new Prophets at each time and the need of centennial Reformers in the Institution of Islam and the need of a Prophet-Reformer in the beginning of the 14th century of the Muslim Era. Thus Islam is not antagonistic to the Religions gone before, but it has reformed them by correcting their wrongs and defended their founders against the attacks made on them by their friends or foes. Let us consider the case of Christianity and Christ as treated by Islam:

(1) Islam very strongly defends Jesus Christ, clearing him and his Mother from the allegations made against them by the Jewish priests. His birth was of the Holy Spirit and not the result of illicit relations of Mary with some soldier or stranger as is written by some antagonists.

(2) Jesus' death was not an accursed death on the Cross, as both the Jews and the Christians believe. But he died a natural, blessed death in good old age of 120 years.

(3) Islam has taught the Christian world by its precept and example that the habit of drinking is demoralising and injurious to the body and the soul and the Christian Powers are at last awakened to the necessity of adopting the Rules of Prohibition, promulgated by Islam 1300 years ago.

(4) Islam has upheld the Cause of women in giving them the rights of possessing property and the Christian world has at last followed its example in making such rules and laws for their own countries.

(5) The Legislative Assemblies of the Western Countries have at last been wise enough to frame their Laws as regards divorce according to the teachings of Islam and in utter defiance of what the Christian Priests have been teaching them for the last 1900 years or more.

(6) Islam has given special privileges to the Christians in the Muslim kingdoms by saying "you will certainly find the nearest in friendship to the Muslims those who are Christians."

(7) The Muslim kings have always protected the Christian Churches from being demolished during War and Peace.

(8) Islam has acknowledged the goodness found in the Christian priests and monks. (Alquran V:82).

(9) Islam not only admires Jesus and his mother, but also the early Christians (Surah 18:13).

Hard things are put in our way, not to stop us, but to call out our courage and strength.—Anon.

The soldier who executes his captain's commands is no less valuable than the captain who gave the order.—Cervantes.

To the persevering mortal, the blessed Immortals are swift.—Zoroaster.

Reason's whole pleasure, all the joys of sense, lie in the three words—health, peace and competence.—Pope.

A refusal to let a sincere man present his side of the question is always a bad sign. It indicates either a fear of the truth or a swaggering intellectual self-satisfaction, which are equally to be condemned.—Dr. Frank Crane.

Short Sketches From Qadian

By MRS. HIDAYAT SADIQ

I

Midsummernight

The day has been scorching hot; like a huge, white fire the sky has been lying all day long over our little town and as much as possible people have kept away from the streets and tried to enjoy what little coolness their houses could give.

But Maghrib-Azan (the Sunset call to prayer) has been chanted after the burning sundisc has disappeared beneath the horizon, and a little, but very little fragrant breeze tries to give us some relief.

I am sitting on the roof, where one can overlook the entire sky; to the East another big round ball is slowing rising up behind our beri-tree. A short time more and she will look down upon us with her silver, soft light, true symbol of our religion of serenity and peace. In the distance I hear the plaintive sound of the flower-seller: "Motia!" (a sweet-scented, white, little flower, beaded into strings to hang round ladies necks).

Soon my husband must return from the Mosque, where he has been saying Maghrib-prayer (Sundown prayer) and I get up to look from the farther end of the roof to the little street, through which he must pass. He generally brings home a motia-string for me. A few minutes more and the light of the lantern at the corner falls suddenly on the well-known white coat and green turban; soon he will now come up the stairs. It has become pleasant now on the roof; an agreeable coolness has settled at last over our town. We hear the distant clatter of dishes in the neighbouring houses; we ourselves are always early taking our nightmeal; generally before sunset-prayers; but the Indian as a rule always eats after Maghrib.

"I have brought a blind boy with me, Dear, who can recite Quran Shareef (the Holy Book of Islam) very well," says my husband, "would you like to hear him?" Of course I will. — He is a boy of 13 years, blind owing to an eye-disease in infancy, from which so many infants in this hot country suffer. His name is Inayatullah, which word means "grace of God." He sits in our courtyard downstairs and a moment

afterwards his young, wonderful voice bursts forth, rises up to our roof, higher and higher, up to God's Throne itself:

"A'uzu billahi min asshaitani 'irrajeem!" (I take God's refuge against Satan the accursed). The beautiful, pure voice sings on; perfect silence reigns in our neighbours' houses; no sound of dishes anymore; even no children's voices are heard any longer; it is as if everything listens in awed silence to these wonderful Verses from our Holy Book, sung by the poor, blind child in our courtyard. Never have his eyes beheld the peerless beauty of his native country; never has he seen the loveliness of an Indian summernight; never will he behold the dazzling sunlight of India's bright, happy winterdays; nor will he ever know the awe-inspiring beauty of an Indian summerstorm, when the whole firmament from East to West and from North to South is ablaze with continuous lightning. And yet what beauty must his young soul already have beheld, to be able to sing God's Glory in such a way!—

Now he is silent in the great silence around us.

Then he gets up, pitifully feeling his way with his stick, helped by another boy, who directs him to our door. Poor little blind singer, but already successful preacher about the beauties of Islam!

When he has gone, another voice rises up from the Minaret of our Mosque nearby; not a young, jubilant child's voice like of our little Inayatullah; but a strong, firm, quiet adult's voice; full of rest; full of certainty; full of the peace of Islam: "Allahu akbar!" (God is most Great). Time for Isha-prayer (the prayer said before retiring for the night) has come.

The Quest of Islam

By

OMAR CLEVELAND

From the dawn of time unto the wondrous present, man has been incurably religious. The belief in a higher power than man can be traced back to remote antiquity.

In the opening words of the Holy Quran, Allah is described as "the Lord of the worlds", thereby widening the conception of the Divine Being. The great theme of the Book of Books is the unity of God, the keynote of Islam. "Everything that exists in the heavens or in the earth

declares His glory and His perfection and that He is the Mighty, the Wise".

Throughout the pages of the sacred scriptures—all testify to the oneness of the Creator. Pure and undefiled religion has ever been saved unto the world by the unselfish devotion to religion of rare souls of the past, whose bones are now forgotten dust.

Those who comprehended sacred truth imparted their knowledge to such as were fitted to receive it in terms intelligible in the light of their own time, and woe betide us, if we neglect, as Moslems, to hear the voices of those who discerned truth from a different angle than that by which we may discern it in our own day.

Men never rise higher than their religious ideals and humanity approximates its highest expression when it lives its noblest religious conceptions. In Islam if man works within the laws of nature and lives aright he is the master of his own destiny. But should he violate or defy those laws, punishment is sure and certain and he will fall the victim of indiscretions created by himself. Islam also imposes upon us personal responsibility for all our actions. The Holy Quran, says in part regarding the day of resurrection, "Read thy Book, there needeth none but thyself to make out an account against thee this day". The aim of Islam is plainly demonstrated—surrender of self comes first. Allah must have first place—even self, the false god that has the largest number of worshippers must be put aside that Allah, may have the supreme place as a living God, whose love purposeth all things, whose wisdom planeth all things and whose power encompasseth all things.

A return to a whole-hearted, whole-souled, whole-minded belief in Allah, must now, as in the past, be the hope of those who would be true to heavenly visions. A man who only professes to be a Moslem is blind, although he has physical eyes, yet he is mentally and spiritually blind.

Through his physical eyes he may see the manifold glories of the heavens, or the forests rich with their autumnal gold and the kaleidoscopic changes of the seasons, but as he has no spiritual or mental vision, he is blind of heart—he is dead and he sees not the beauties, excellences and power, nor the goodness, love and wisdom of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

However, we must not let the lack of vision of such men cause a

wavering of our own faith, for never more will any one inaugurate a faith more noble or a religion more true and far-reaching than Islam. Anent two simple doctrines—there is no God but Allah, and Muhammad is the Apostle of Allah, is all that is demanded of the convert to Islam, for that has brought light to countless erring souls and peace of mind, to those who were anxious for the light of heaven, and helped many who were eager to have direct communion with Allah.

The pages of the Holy Quran vibrate today with the same sublime message as they did in the days of the Prophet, and declare that every blessing of God was meant for those who will use it in the service of God, which stands for the service of humanity.

A perusal of its contents have instilled in many, a divine fervor to accept its message and take up the cause, for as the Holy Quran, truly says, "This day have I perfected your religion for you, and have completed My favors upon you and chosen for you the religion of Islam—Surrender to Allah".

Religion and Art

By

NINA A. STAUFFER

Religion has always found a place in the life of the human race. No tribe has ever been found who did not have some form of spiritual worship. It has been this dominant influence which has brought man from the depths of darkness and superstition to the light of civilization, it has also been this constant search for something better and nobler in his existence which has led him to give birth to his creative fancies, through the medium of the arts.

Poetry, music, architecture, in fact all art has been the direct outgrowth of deep and beautiful thoughts. If it were possible to trace the thoughts to their origin, one would, no doubt, find them embedded in some religious background; prompted by some spiritual motive; for the museums and art galleries contain rare pieces of statuary, paintings and other treasures which are expressions of religious fervor. Every anthropological research party finds traces of some form of crude art, even among the most primitive tribes. When the races raised their standards

of living to a higher plane, the evidences that a finer art was developed, is also found. Relics of early Indian life in America would not be complete without the ornate handiwork of those primitive days. The poetry and the music of the Indian has been preserved by white men who lived among them and later gave their songs and rhythms to the world. Naturally, one interprets the wildness of the primitive life in the Indian songs and music, but there is always a hint that the "Great Spirit" is hovering near, ready to protect them from all evil.

However, the religious element is found, not only in the art of the early American Indian, but it is also found among other primitive tribes, who have devoted their best handiwork in behalf of the clothing, totem poles, headdresses and other objects to be used in their religious ceremonies.

The pagan gods inspired the Ancient Greeks and Romans to give to the world a classical art which has lived long after both civilizations have become only pages in history. After all other evidences have been effaced, the religion of each period of the development of the human race has been preserved through the art treasures left behind.

Nevertheless, it is often argued that religion was not an influential factor in the creative art world. It was only used as subject matter because the great majority of people were interested in the spiritual life. Is it possible that Bach, one of the greatest musical composers who ever lived could have spent so much time in the church, and could have written so many compositions for the church service without having had some spiritual motive? Is it not logical to assume that during those prayerful hours in the church that his thoughts could free themselves from the sordid reality of the world and could delve into a divine creation?

The "Inferno" written by Dante when Europe was beginning to awaken from its medieval slumber must have been an answer to a question which had haunted his mind. Likewise, "Paradise Lost" and "Paradise Regained" probably solved some problem which the blind Milton had perceived through his Puritanical training. Would Michael Angelo have selected religious subjects and traced those divine thoughts in form and color on a bit of canvas, if he were not vitally interested in the underlying idea which prompted the creation of his composition? Is it not also true that the other Florentine painters as well as the noted Flemish artists left masterpieces devoted to the spiritual life? Did it just happen

that some of the best Gothic architecture is seen in the European cathedrals? Is it just an incident that the Ancient Greeks and Romans used their finest architectural style in their temples of worship? Does one not observe the Mohammedan religion revealed in the mosque architecture? So it is throughout the world, every country has some religious temple of beauty to display.

It is generally supposed that the average lay mind cannot understand a great artistic masterpiece unless it is first interpreted by a person who has made a thorough study of it. An untrained person would not attempt to execute a Bach "Chorale," and only a student of literature would attempt to interpret "Paradise Lost", yet, the world recognizes them as supreme creations in the art world. However, if anything new in art is produced the public looks at it askance and regards it with suspicion before the world will accept it and give it its rightful place. Many years may pass before the new is recognized, and at that time the world will have progressed enough for the lay mind to sense the significance, and meaning of this forgotten creation.

So it is with religion. People have become so accustomed to the old dogmas, even though they have outlived their usefulness, that they do not like to habituate themselves to anything different. They do not understand the new doctrine, and perhaps, there is no one to explain it to them, hence through their lack of knowledge they are likely to condemn the unknown. Whenever a religious teacher attempts to introduce dissimilar belief to the people, he immediately feels a great resistance toward his teachings.

Islam, the religious torch which is trying to brighten the western world is meeting these obstacles. Thirteen hundred and fifty years have elapsed since Muhammad gave his message to the world through the Arabian people. Though for centuries, Asia, Africa and a considerable part of Europe have been uplifted by this noble faith, comparatively few people in America are acquainted with its sublime teachings. Yet during the short time since it was introduced in this country, it has achieved a great measure of success, and is on its rapid way to the attainment of its ultimate goal. Through its dynamic spiritual force the Holy Quran will eventually cast its dominant influence westward just as it has done for many centuries in the Orient.

The Prophet Day

Hazrat Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmood Ahmad, the Head of the Ahmadiyya Community in Islam inaugurated the movement of celebrating "Prophet Day" with the noble purpose of presenting true and authentic historical facts concerning the Holy Prophet of Islam. Every year, under the auspices of the Ahmadiyya Movement thousands of meetings are held and countless lectures are delivered, dwelling on the various aspects of the life and teachings of Muhammad. The last celebration of "Prophet Day" took place on the sixth of November, 1932, on which date innumerable meetings were held not only in all parts of India, but throughout the entire world. The American branch of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam celebrated "Prophet Day" with splendid success and held fifteen meetings on that date in the different centers of its activities—such as Chicago, Illinois; Detroit, Michigan; Indianapolis, Indiana; East St. Louis, Illinois; Kansas City, Missouri; Dowagiac, Michigan; Grand Rapids, Michigan; Cincinnati, Ohio; Cleveland, Ohio; Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; and Washington, Pennsylvania. Of the four Chicago meetings, one was held in the Howard Community Church where Sufi M. R. Bengalee, Brother Omar Khan and Robert E. Barclay were the speakers, all of whom dwelt at length on the mighty contributions that Muhammad made towards the upliftment of humanity. In his excellent speech, Mr. Barclay said, in part:

"By the time of MUHAMMAD, the station of woman had sunk low indeed. A woman was the property of a whole family. There was no limit to the number of wives a man might take, or how many sweet-hearts he might acquire. Women were inherited as was a flock of sheep, and the heir could do with them as he would. A man could divorce his wife and remarry her as many times as he chose. While she was divorced, she was lawful prey of any man. Again a man might declare his wife was his mother—which put her in the awkward position of being neither married nor divorced—a state of suspension. The literature of the time was obscene, and no woman, regardless of her virtue was exempt from being the subject of indecent remarks on the streets.

Such was the state of woman at the time of MUHAMMAD. Then came the change. Through MUHAMMAD, Allah spoke. Obscene stories and songs were put under ban. Woman was granted the right

of divorce—a husband must provide for his wife as long as she chose to remain his wife. The number of wives was limited to four, with the further limitation that the husband must be financially able to support all of them in equal state, there must be no partiality shown to any of them as far as material benefits were concerned. And further than that, women were no longer chattels belonging to a man or family—could no longer be inherited. When a woman became a widow, it behooved some man in the community who could support her, to marry her. They, in a tropical country, greatly aided in maintaining a strict morality. A public house could no longer exhibit women dancers. A woman shared power with her husband—and until the present generation when women's rights came to the fore in western countries, in Islamic countries alone have women possessed rights to inherit and hold property; divorce and complete protection from slander, and widowhood.

Muhammad said:

"The best man is he who gives the kindest treatment to his wife."

Again he said:

"Heaven lies beneath the feet of mothers."

"Oh, People, fear God. See that you give the kindest treatment to women."

The raising of womanhood was a tremendous step upwards from the depths in which MUHAMMAD found her at the beginning of His mission.

Idolatry had grown to prodigious proportions in Arabia. The Ka-aba at Mecca was filled with Holy Images. Each tribe had one or more. The Christian missionaries but added more with their statues of Christ and the saints. Allah, speaking through Muhammad, swept the Ka-aba clean. Hence forward it was a crime to make an image of a living creature. There was only one God—Allah—without form—a spirit that pervaded all space and all things.

Perhaps in none of the ancient countries was drunkenness so prevalent as in Arabia. Every home carried its own supply of liquor and the height of hospitality was to supply enough of it to make the guest sleep well. The time had arrived when this curse must be lifted from mankind and with one sweeping denunciation in the Koran, Prohibition was in force for the True Believer. Allah had spoken. The wine

skins were punctured, and the wine jars broken. Wine flowed like rain-water in the streets of Medina.

How different was the effect of this prohibition amendment when it bore the stamp of Almighty God than it bears only the approval of a wavering uncertain electorate. New strength and vigor was born into the Arabian race.

Gambling held as strong a hold on Arab nature as did drinking—but Muhammad's spiritual forces, backed by the direct word of God, relieved Arabia of this long standing evil.

Queer superstitions—prognostications—belief in weird genii and evil spirits had been bred by ignorance. Few could read. The Koran was the word of God. It was the guide to the full life and the rewards here and hereafter—everyone wanted to read and know for himself. Education was given a tremendous impetus and with education came civilization. The only civilization the world knew for almost a thousand years. I have not the time to speak in detail on Islam's contribution to civilization. It is a subject for hours in itself.

But perhaps the greatest of all evils which confronted Muhammad as he began his mission was the Priesthood. Arabia was surrounded and impregnated by Priest-ridden religions. Their followers were exhorted to frenzy against this new religion which abolished the time-honored lechery of priest-hood. It was fighting for its existence, and is it to be wondered at that the writings of the Christian, Hebrew and Pharisee Priests are full of calumnies against this Priest-less Islam?

Against these priest-ridden religions, Islam prevailed—and that, I feel, is the greatest attribute for this religion founded by Muhammad—not a God—but just a man.

To Muhammad—Prophet of Allah—Liberator of women—enforcer of morals—abolisher of idolatry, prohibitionist—hater of Priest-hood and hypocrisy and peace-maker, I have paid my tribute."

Abu Huaira reports that the Holy Prophet said, "There are three signs of a hypocrite; when he speaks, he tells a lie; when he makes a promise, he breaks it and he abuses the trust with which he is entrusted." (Bukhari)

The Tragedy of Prejudice

By SUFI M. R. BENGALÉE

Appalling ignorance exists in the western countries regarding the Holy Faith of Islam and its sublime teachings. Through centuries of repetition, many false stories and fantastic ideas concerning this great religion, have gained currency among the so-called enlightened people of the western hemisphere. It is a sad commentary on occidental enlightenment, catholicity, and propaganda. The world is greatly divided by misunderstanding and misrepresentation. Hence, we find widespread enmity, animosity, and hatred among the various nations and races of the earth. Now that all right thinking men are deeply concerned about ushering in a new era of world peace by building bridges over the chasm of prejudice, to take any step in writing or in speaking which stimulates disunity and disharmony, and widens the gulf of misunderstanding, should not only be sadly regretted, but highly condemned. The following passage in the Editorial page of the Sunday Herald and Examiner, recently came to my notice.

"The Mohammedan, taught by his prophet who alone had the right to speak for Allah, the high god, believes that man's object on earth should be to spread the faith, destroy its enemies, pray kneeling several times daily *with face toward the tomb of the prophet at Mecca*. The reward for these things is eternal happiness in a sensual paradise, where each man finds himself thirty feet tall, with energies that never become weakened, eternally supplied with wines but never intoxicated, and where beautiful females, 'houris,' their bodies made of solid musk always surround him and do his bidding." (Chicago Herald and Examiner — Aug. 21, 1932.)

In this small passage, the learned author of the article betrays ridiculous ignorance. Even a school child ought to know that Mohammed's tomb is not in Mecca, but in Medina — a town about two hundred and sixty miles from Mecca, and the Moslem wrongfully called Mohammedan, prays with his face toward the Mosque Kaaba, which is situated in Mecca.

The writer then goes on to repeat the same common misconception that,

"The Mohammedan believes that the object of man's life on earth should be to spread the faith and destroy enemies."

The general public may in some measure be excused for holding such erroneous views regarding the great religion, as these misconceptions have been deliberately propagated, in order to poison the minds of the western public, against the Holy Faith. But, a writer of importance, as one of the Editors of the Chicago Herald and Examiner must be, can by no means be pardoned for such appalling ignorance as has been shown in the above passage. The very word Islam which means peace, is an abundant proof of the fact that the great religion does not advocate war and fighting. Its message to humanity is the message of peace and brotherhood. Islam does not allow the use of force in any shape or form, except in self defense. The Moslem scripture, the Holy Quran, says, in no ambiguous terms:

"There must be no compulsion in religious matters." (11.256).

"Summon thou to the way of the Lord with wisdom and kind admonition." (XVI.—126)

These verses make it perfectly clear that there is no sanction of the use of force for the propagation of the Faith.

The conduct and example of MUHAMMAD prove beyond the shadow of a doubt that he never resorted to sword or force for the propagation of his faith. MUHAMMAD'S life as a prophet is divided into two parts — Meccan life before Hijrah and his life in Medina from Hijrah until his death. George Sale, in the preface of his translation of the Quran says regarding his preaching of Islam until Hijrah:

"Hitherto Mohamet had propagated his religion by fair means, so that the whole success of his enterprise, before his flight to Medina, must be attributed to persuasion only and not to compulsion. . . . He declares his business was only to preach and admonish; that he had no authority to compel any person to embrace his religion; and that whether people believed or not was not his concern but belonged to God only. And he was so far from allowing his followers to use force that he exhorted them to bear patiently these injuries which were offered them on account of their

faith; and, when persecuted himself, chose rather to quit the place of his birth and retire to Medina than to make any resistance."

T. W. Arnold who made a thorough study of the subject says in his famous book, "The Preachings of Islam," concerning MUHAMMAD'S conduct in the propagation of his faith during his life in Medina after Hijrah:

"Exactly similar efforts were made to preach the faith of Islam and to convert the unbelieving Arabs after the Hijrah as before in the days of Muhammad's political weakness." (The Preachings of Islam).

The same author says regarding the history of his propagation of Islam in the subsequent centuries:

". . . From the very beginning, Islam bears the stamp of a missionary religion that seeks to win the hearts of men, to convert them and persuade them to enter the brotherhood of the faithful; and as it was in the beginning, so has it continued to be up to the present day, as will be the object of the following pages to show." (The Preachings of Islam).

It should be borne in mind that the above quotations are taken from the Christian writers and are as such from unwilling witnesses.

The falsity of this groundless charge is proved beyond all doubt in India, where the Moslem population has increased far more rapidly during the last seventy years under the English rule than under the Moslem Kings and Emperors for seven centuries, and it is quite evident that there is no room for the charge that Islam was propagated in India by force during English rule.

A grand and standing refutation of the false charge is that at the present time Islam is peacefully penetrating into, and daily gaining converts from all the Christian states of the West. Islam is making rapid and steady progress. The day is not far when the majority of the people of the earth will find glory and happiness in embracing Islam. As soon as the veil of misrepresentation and false propaganda is lifted, and the beauties and excellencies of the great religion are known, people will invariably adopt it. People are drawn towards the Truth as by the law of gravitation.

The most damaging accusation brought against Islam, is, "The reward of all these things is eternal happiness in a sensual paradise." The

tragedy of ignorance and prejudice is so vile that the religion which makes the observance of prayers five times a day obligatory upon its followers, enjoins compulsory fasting and absolutely prohibits intoxicating liquors, is mercilessly assailed as having advocated sensual paradise. Can blind prejudice go any farther?

Nothing can be more foreign to the lofty teachings of Islam than a sensual heaven. Some of the most beautiful metaphors and allegories of the Holy Quran have been tortuously twisted to depict such an ugly picture. According to the Holy Quran, the joys of heaven are all spiritual. The Book of God expressly says regarding the heavenly bounties: "*No soul knoweth what blessings are reserved as reward for their virtuous deeds.*" (XXXII—7) The Holy Prophet, MUHAMMAD, elucidates when he says: "*The bounties of heaven are things which the eye has not seen, nor has the ear heard, nor has the mind of man conceived.*" (Bukhari)

In short, heaven, according to Islam, is the attainment of a life of ever-lasting progress and complete joy and happiness through union with God and by the development of the fine spiritual qualities and the unlimited capacities that have been implanted in man.

Two Slave-Leaders of Islam--Bilal and Zaid

God has created all men free and Islam was the first religion to recognize the inviolability of this most sacred heritage of humanity. We give below a brief sketch of the lives of Bilal and Zaid, both freed slaves, to show to what heights of spiritual, social and intellectual eminence Islam had raised the slave community.

Bilal was an Ethiopian slave. He was born at Mecca. The fact that he was one of those very few individuals who responded to the call of Truth in the very early days when the Prophet was quite helpless and his cause seemed to be hopeless shows, beyond all possibility of doubt, that the slaves looked upon the Prophet as their greatest friend and helper, the sincerest advocate and champion of their cause. Bilal was subjected by the Meccans to persecution and privations that beggar description. He was plainly told that the course he had adopted would lead to his destruction and that he would have to choose between death

and recantation. Being a slave he was quite helpless and there seemed to be no end to the persecution he had to endure. And yet Bilal the Ethiopian was not the man who could by any means be turned away from Islam and the Prophet. Deliberately and after mature thinking he had taken the step. The storm of persecution passed. The same Ethiopian slave became one of the most respected leaders of Islam. Omar, the mightiest monarch of his time used to stand up to show his respect to him whenever Bilal happened to visit him. He often called him the "Chief of the Muslims." He was the trusted personal companion of the Prophet and was in charge of the management of his household. After the death of his beloved Master, Bilal requested Abu Bakr, who was then not only the Head of the Muslim community but also his benefactor (Hazrat Abu Bakr had bought Bilal from Omayya and emancipated him) to allow him to go and serve the cause of God in Iraq or Syria. The answer that this request of Bilal elicited from the Khalifa was very pathetic. "Bilal," said Abu Bakr, "I beg you in the name of God and the right I have over you not to leave me in my old age." Such were the relations that existed between the Head of the Muslim State and an Ethiopian freed slave. On the death of Abu Bakr, Omar repeated to him the request of his predecessor. But Bilal refused to be deprived any longer of the reward of serving the cause of Truth and Righteousness. His memory is held in very high esteem by Muslims in all countries. He lies buried in the Muslim graveyard at Damascus. By his side are enjoying their eternal sleep some of the most respected of the Prophet's companions and wives, Abu Obaida, Dihay-i-kalbi, Saad bin Waqqas, Umm-i-Habiba and Umm-i-Salma. But his tomb attracts more pilgrims than are attracted by any other tomb in Damascus. The love and affection which the Muslims bear towards him is only a reflection of the attachment which the Holy Prophet had for his loyal and devoted servant and of the respect and esteem in which he was held by his companions. The abiding place that Bilal has secured in the hearts of the Muslims all the world over is an eloquent testimony to the inestimable service that Islam rendered to the cause of slaves in raising them from the lowest depths of degradation to the highest pinnacles of social eminence.

Another freed slave was Zaid of eternal fame. He was given to the possession of the Holy Prophet by his wife, Khadija, long before the Prophet was entrusted with his great and noble mission. The Prophet

at once freed him. Though he was given his freedom without, however, any request or desire on his part, Zaid remained attached to the Prophet with a devotion at once unprecedented and unparalleled. Never had any slave carried out the behests and commands of his master so completely, joyfully and faithfully as did Zaid obey the Holy Prophet and no father had ever been so loving and kind to his son as was the Prophet to Zaid. The Prophet's affection and kindness to Zaid was repaid by a pure, unmixed and unsullied fidelity and love by the latter. Even the imploring entreaties of a beseeching father and uncle could not persuade him to leave the Prophet. "Nothing in the world can separate me from the Prophet," Zaid told his father and uncle, when they came to take him home with them, "he is all in all to me in the world."

He was always looked upon and treated as a member of his family by the Prophet who loved him so much that he came to be known and called as "Zaid, son of Muhammad." The Prophet had him first married to Umm-i-Aiman whom he (the Holy Prophet) respected very much as she was his foster-mother and then to Zainab who was his cousin. Zaid, according to some traditionists, was the first man to believe in the Prophet. When Hamza, the Prophet's dear uncle, became Muslim he was linked into a chain of brotherhood with Zaid. Ayesha says that Zaid was never sent in any expedition, over which he was not put in command and he was never left behind by the Prophet in any expedition when he was not made the chief of the Muslims remaining behind and his representative and successor in Medina. He was entrusted with the supreme command by the Prophet in nine battles. Zaid sealed his devotion to his noble and beloved Master with the blood of his life at the battlefield of Muta. Ayesha thinks that if Zaid had been living at the time of the Prophet's demise, the latter would have nominated him as his successor. From the manner in which the Prophet treated Zaid it does not seem a very remote probability that Zaid would have been selected by the Prophet as his successor and the Head of the Muslim State after his death. From the very degraded position of a slave to the possibility of being nominated as the successor of the Greatest of God's prophets and the Noblest son of Man is indeed a marvellous change and this change in the position of the slaves was effected by Islam. (Review of Religions.)

Correspondence

838 S. Addison St.,
Indianapolis, Indiana.

Sufi M. R. Bengalee, M. A.
Editor of the Moslem Sunrise
56 E. Congress St., Suite 1307
Chicago, Illinois.
Dear Sir:

It gives me great pleasure to write this letter to you. I want you to know how immensely I enjoyed and how much I was impressed by the inspiring lecture that you gave at Mr. Hurd's home. It was not only instructive and enlightening but interesting to the superlative degree. I can safely say that I can not dispute with or deny the truth of what you expounded in the name of Islam in your winning way. You seem to me to be irresistible. I have become deeply interested in the Faith of Islam, but I want to study the subject still more thoroughly.

The other day I met a gentleman who said that he studied religion for thirty years. I asked him about his opinion of Mohammanism. He replied, "It is all right, it is just a sketch of the Christian Bible or Christianity". I want you to enlighten me upon the subject.

May God bless you with splendid success in the great work you are doing.

Yours sincerely,
G. W. Brown.

✓ ✓ ✓

56 E. Congress St.,
Suite 1307,
Chicago, Illinois.

Mr. G. W. Brown,
838 S. Addison Street
Indianapolis, Indiana
My Dear Mr. Brown:

I received your ever welcome letter and was indeed pleased to hear from you. I was really glad that you referred the matter to me. I want you to note the following remarks on the subject.

It is one of the most ridiculous Christian charges against Islam that the Holy Faith is but "a sketch of the Christian Bible or Christianity."

First: One wonders, if Islam is but a 'sketch of the Christian Bible or Christianity' why in the world the Christians did not accept it? If it is taken from Christianity then the Christians must be happy to accept "Mohammedanism", as they wrongfully call it.

Secondly: Students of Comparative Religions have found upon investigation that the teachings of Christianity have been taken almost word for word from the teachings of Buddhism, from the ancient Egyptian religions and from the teachings of other old faiths. Jesus, himself, does not claim to have brought any new religion. His teachings are but some aspects of the Law of Moses. He says, "Think not that I am come to destroy, but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, till Heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from

the law till all be fulfilled". (Matthew v: 17, 18) If the charge is true, then Christianity is in no better position than Mohammedanism. They are both in the same boat, to use an American slang.

Thirdly: The Moslem Scripture, the Quran from cover to cover denounces and violently refutes the most important doctrines of Orthodox Christianity, namely: Divinity of Christ, Trinity, Vicarious atonement, and so forth. How can the Christians have the audacity to say that Mohammadanism is but 'a sketch of the Christian Bible or Christianity?'

Fourthly: In the Quran there are teachings which cannot be found in the Christian Bible. Christianity ignores or passes with generalities subjects which have been exhaustively dealt with in Islam; for instance, the economic problems, the liquor question, marriage and divorce problem, international relations and so forth. If the principles of Islam could be made the standard of living and were applied to the solution of these tangled difficulties which have shaken the very foundations of civilization, how quickly and beautifully would these baffling problems of the sophisticated world be solved.

Fifthly: The 'Sermon on the Mount' comprises the teachings of Christianity. The teachings of Islam are entirely different from those of the 'Sermon on the Mount.' For example, the Bible says, "*But I say unto you, that ye resist not evil; but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also*". (Mathew 5, 39). Christianity lays one-sided emphasis on forgiveness. Islam enjoins upon its followers forgiveness, mercy and kindness, but does not confine itself to one-sided emphasis on forgiveness. The Holy Quran says, "*The recompense of evil is evil proportionate thereto, but whoso forgives and amends, he shall find his reward for it from God*". (XLII-41). The point stressed in the above verse is that 'to effect reformation or to do real good' must be the guiding principle in the exercise of forgiveness or punishment. You have to look to the occasion whether it demands forgiveness or punishment and act accordingly. Punishment and severity at one time may be as good and ethically justifiable as forgiveness and mercy at another. So, if by forgiving you can amend or reform the culprit and do good to Society, then you have to forgive, but sometimes forgiveness will do more harm than good; by misplaced forgiveness you encourage the offender to do more wrong. In that case, the guilty person must be punished to the extent of his offense. This is but one example which vividly illustrates how the Islamic teachings are different from those of Christianity. Still the Christian Propagandist will make bold to say that Islam is but 'a sketch of Christianity'.

Sixthly: I want to tell you a story which will throw a strong light upon the subject. Mark Twain once heard a celebrated preacher. At the end of the services the distinguished preacher was introduced to Mark Twain who highly complimented the sermon but declared that there was nothing new in it. He said he had a book at home in which every word of the sermon could be found. The preacher protested vehemently saying that it was an original sermon, saying that he had prepared it but the night before, and that it was impossible to find it anywhere else. Mark Twain said that he would send him the book. By the next mail, the clergyman received a dictionary. So it is one thing to find this or that teaching scattered here and there, and it is quite a different thing to have a system of religion and a perfect code of moral and spiritual law which satisfies all human needs. That is precisely what Islam has done.

Seventhly: The Christians attack the Holy Quran with a double-edged sword. Whenever, in the Holy Quran, they have found something in direct conflict with the Bible, they have most readily charged the Holy Quran with mis-statement. If, on the other hand, they have found in it something in conformity with the Biblical word, they have forthwith hurled against it the charge of plagiarism. They forget that all the true prophets of God came with one and the same mission. God is the same everywhere and at all times. Of course, according to the needs of the time, different have been His manifestations. Moses came with the Law of Vengeance and Jesus came as a meek and humble preacher. Muhammad was the final law-giving prophet with a universal code which furnished the necessary guiding rules for the civilization of all men, and religion was brought to perfection at his hands. The teachings of the Quran are comprehensive. Could it be expected that all the former revelations would be excluded from it? On the contrary, the Holy Quran embraces all the previous scriptures. This is the genius of Islam.

May all good things of God be with you.

Yours sincerely,
Sufi M. R. Bengalee,

✓ ✓ ✓

1601 Virginia Avenue,
Kansas City, Missouri.

Sufi M. R. Bengalee, M. A.
56 E. Congress St., Suite 1307
Chicago, Illinois.
Dear Sir:

I have recently embraced Islam and joined the Ahmadiyya Movement. Since that time I have read several books explaining the doctrines and teachings of this Holy Faith and have been regularly attending the meetings of our mission which is making steady progress. They have been so uplifting and illuminating that I find myself in ceaseless quest of learning more and more about it. It is my invincible resolution to devote my life to further the Cause of Islam. May Allah help me and strengthen me.

I read about the "cup of Kafur (camphor) and Zanjbeel (ginger)". I would be highly obliged to you if you would explain to me the passages in which these words occur. I am anxiously waiting for your reply. May Allah bless you.

With best respects, and salamm.

Yours in Islam,
Mrs. W. O. Limpkin.
(Sister Rasheeda)

✓ ✓ ✓

Mrs. W. C. Limpkin,
(Sister Rasheeda)
1601 Virginia Avenue,
Kansas City, Missouri.
My Dear Sister:

Assalamo Alaikum. (Peace be unto you).

Some time ago I received your welcome letter. I was exceedingly glad to know that you embraced Islam and that you are desirous of serving the cause of Truth. Islam is the greatest gift of God to man. By serving Islam, you not only

serve God and man but you serve yourself best. It is also highly gratifying to note that your mission is making steady progress. May Allah crown your efforts with glorious success.

You wanted me to explain to you the verses mentioning the "cup of Kafur (camphor) and Zanjbeel (ginger)". The words "camphor" and "ginger" in the verses under discussion were not used in the literal sense of the term. They were, on the other hand, used metaphorically to explain the spiritual conditions of man. The verses under discussion are as follows:

"Verily, the righteous shall drink of a cup whereof the mixture is "Kafur".

"A spring where from the servants of Allah drink, making it gush forth abundantly." (LXXVI—5, 6)

The word "Kafur" (camphor) is derived from the root "Kafr" which means to cover and to suppress. The word "Kafur" (camphor) used in this connection refers to the state of righteous servants of God in which they succeed in making a total extinction and complete suppression of the worldly desires and carnal passions. The more a man struggles to suppress his carnal passions, trusts in and leans towards God, the farther off he is from the subjugation of the lower self. When he succeeds in attaining mastery over his passions, desires and faculties so that he can apply them according to the will and commandments of God, he is said to be righteous and to have taken a drink tempered with "camphor", for "camphor" has the qualities to suppress the poisonous matter in the body.

The Holy Quran says in another verse:

"And they are made to drink of another cup whereof the mixture is "Zanjbeel". (LXXVI—17)

"Zanjbeel" or ginger is the root of a plant which is very useful in promoting the natural heat of the body. Another interesting thing to bear in mind in this connection is that the word "Zanjbeel" is a compound of two words "Zana" and "Jabl". "Zana" means to ascend and "Jabl" means "mountain". So the word comes to mean "to ascend the mountain". The word "Zanjbeel" (ginger) used in this connection refers to the property of giving heat to the body as well as to the meaning of "ascending the mountains". The word points to the fact that when man has been able to reach the spiritual state that he is no longer the slave of his carnal passions but their master, which condition has been described by "the cup tempered with camphor", he stands in need of divine help and spiritual strength so that he may go up steep mountainous paths, accomplish most difficult tasks and perform great deeds of sacrifice in the path of God.

In other words when it is said that man has been made to drink of the "cup of Zanjbeel", it only means that he is spiritually strong and is able to traverse the dreary deserts and climb the steep heights which the spiritual wayfarer must pass to reach the goal. In short, in order to explain the two spiritual conditions of man, the Holy Quran has employed the two words "camphor" and "ginger", viz. "camphor" that which suppresses the poisonous matter:—man in this stage has subdued his passions; and "Zanjbeel" that which gives strength to ascend the heights. In this stage man is spiritually strong to overcome all difficulties.

I hope that the above explanation of the words "Kafur" and "Zanjbeel" will give you the true meanings of these two words.

May Allah be with you.

Yours in Islam,
Sufi M. R. Bengalee

Western History on Islam Declared False by Chicago Court

The Standard Historical Society of Cincinnati, Ohio, publishes a set of books which they call "*The Standard History of the World*", and like the old *Holy Roman Empire*, which was neither Holy, nor Roman, nor an Empire, these books are neither Standard, nor a History, nor about the World. They were merely a hodge-podge of the author's imagination, prejudice and falsehoods.

Robert E. Barclay, an attorney whose articles on Islam have appeared in these pages, received a set of these books, examined them, and promptly sent them back. Among other errors which he pointed out was that the story of Islam and the life of Muhammad were far from true. The Standard Historical Society brought suit.

The Moslem Missionary, Sufi M. R. Bengalee, was brought before Judge Edward B. Casey to testify on the life of the Prophet and the accepted history of Islam. To secure other expert testimony, Judge Casey summoned Prof. Martin Sprengling of the Oriental Institute at the University of Chicago. Both the expert witnesses agreed upon the unauthenticity and incorrectness of the history. The result was the bringing out for judicial notice a great many errors in the common beliefs regarding Islam and its Prophet.

Among these were:

Muhammad's mother was not a Christian Jewess, who taught her son Christian principles which he later subverted to his own ends, but a simple Arab Quarish girl who died while her illustrious son was still too young to think of such subjects.

The statements made in the History concerning Islam were confused with the incidents taken from the Arabian Night's Entertainment, a book of stories and folk lore of many oriental peoples, and in no wise has the least bearing on Islam as a religion any more than Grimm's Fairy Stories on Christianity.

The Quran was written in its entirety during the life of the Prophet and gathered together within two years after his death. And today we

read Quran exactly in the same words as it was first written, without the slightest change.

Many other facts were brought out and other common falacies rectified, but space prevents the detailing of the testimony, for the trial was in process for two days.

The interesting result was that Judge Casey held against the Book Concern, declaring that books containing so many errors cannot rightly go by the name of History. And further than that, the case received wide-spread publicity throughout the World, for reporters writing, "Muhammad in Court", made an item of unusual news interest.

The Pilgrimage

(A Short Radio Talk)

By

SUFI M. R. BENGALÉE

The Pilgrimage is the most important and sacred of all Moslem ritual observances. It is one of the five pillars of Islam. The other four are belief in one God, performance of five daily prayers, payment of the poor rate and fasting during the month of Ramadhan.

The word "Hajj," which you call in English "Pilgrimage," means "journey." It ordains a yearly gathering of Moslems from all parts of the globe to the holy city of Mecca in order that rites and ceremonies of the Pilgrimage be performed.

The Pilgrimage to Mecca is a symbol of respect shown to places where the will of God was manifested and serves to remind people of these incidents. It is reminiscent of the story of Ishmael who had been left in the desert by Abraham; and how those who make sacrifices in the path of God are protected and honored. This stimulates in the Pilgrims faith in the power and might of God. The Pilgrim finds himself near the place which has been dedicated to the worship of God from time immemorial. And he comes to experience a spiritual association with those who have through many centuries been bound together by the love and remembrance of God.

The spiritual significance of the Pilgrimage is that man must make a journey from this material world to God. This life is but a journey. We are all travelers to God. Journey to God means the realization of,

or union with, God—the highest purpose of life.

This Pilgrimage brings together the believers of all nations and languages throughout the different parts of the Moslem World. This vast gathering of Moslems impresses upon the minds of the faithful a sense of their common life and of their brotherhood in the faith. It fosters unity and a feeling of fraternity among the Moslems without distinction as to caste, creed, color or country.

This also calls the Moslems to the supreme duty of bringing about world wide human unity.

The journey is performed with several halts at fixed stations.

The significance of the stops at various points throughout the pilgrimage is that life's spiritual journey must be traversed gradually stage by stage.

At a certain place, the traveler must discard his old clothes and wear the Pilgrim's garb. This signifies that the Pilgrim has cast off the qualities of human nature and all unhealthy wishes and desires, and has attained to purity and spirituality. The change of the Pilgrim's dress also impresses upon his mind the importance of renouncing a life of extravagance and adopting a life of stern simplicity and renunciation.

One important feature of the Pilgrimage is centered in the sacrifice of an animal. This gives the Moslem a symbolic lesson that man succeeds in the lofty purpose of life only when he is able to annihilate his lower or evil self. It means complete self-conquest and mastery.

Another important lesson to be derived from this sacrifice of an animal is that—just as an animal is sacrificed for man, so also must man always remain prepared to sacrifice himself for a higher and nobler cause.

All the meat of the animal is not consumed by the person who makes the sacrifice. A considerable portion of it is distributed among the poor and needy. This gives the Moslem a supreme lesson in charity and in the service of humanity. And this distribution of meat brings to his mind the realization that a part of all belonging to him must be spent for the welfare of humanity.

In short, the Moslem Pilgrimage is filled with deep philosophy. It is a symbol of unity and brotherhood, self-conquest and self-sacrifice. It is a dynamic inspiration for high ideals of life.

Postures in Moslem Prayer

Body and soul make the man. Hence, true and complete worship must be of the body as well as of the soul. The words that we use in giving praise and showing our gratitude to Allah in our prayers are the expression of our worship of the soul, but the physical postures, standing, bending and prostration are the expression of our physical worship.

There is an inexplicable connection between the body and the soul. One is influenced by the other, or one reacts on the other; so these postures help to create humbleness of spirit or the devotional frame of mind. In these different postures your heart melts so much that you can pray most fervently.

There are various ways of showing respect. History tells us that standing, bending and prostrating are the various ways in which respect has been shown to kings in different parts of the world. Islam combines in its prayers all the different modes of showing respect, and to God alone the utmost respect is due.

Life is a great spiritual journey. The goal of this journey is the realization of God or the attainment of union with Him and the crowning glory of life is to achieve success in that great objective. We can not achieve that success without making sacrifices and going through severe trials. The lives of the great prophets of God, the saints and spiritually great men, demonstrate this fact. These different physical postures in the Moslem prayer suggest great symbolical lessons and in the course of these postures, we make certain pledges to God. Standing means that we stand prepared to undergo all hardships in the great adventure of the spiritual life; bending means that we cut off all connections with the material world and bend towards God; and prostrating means that we throw ourselves into the dust and are ready to humble ourselves for the attainment of union with God.

Standing, bending and prostrating denote restlessness. By doing so, we show that we are eager for the attainment of the highest success in life, i. e., meeting with God. Just as the cries of a baby moves the heart of the mother, so also our restlessness draws the mercy of God.

When God sees that we are restless in search of Him, He grants us nearness to Him.

There is a physical side to this and that is; the whole thing, I mean, standing, bending, and prostrating is very good physical exercise which is conducive to health.

The Moslem prayer in congregation in the mosque fosters unity and brotherhood. It is an impressive scene.

The Tomb of Jesus

Recently we came across an interesting book, "Mystical life of Jesus" by H. Spencer Lewis, which supports the theory that Jesus did not die on the cross. When he was taken down from the cross, he was still alive, and in a state of unconsciousness. We read on page 265 thus:

"The storm soon broke and delayed the removal of the body of Jesus for a few hours, but in that time food and drink were given Him, and support was placed under His body to prevent it from pulling too greatly upon the nails which tortured His flesh. The few faithful ones noted with great anxiety that a somber stillness and a numbness was passing over the body, and that gradually Jesus lost consciousness. At the earliest possible moment, when the storm quieted, torches were brought and an examination of the body revealed that Jesus was not dead. The blood flowing from the wounds proved that the body was not lifeless, and so the cross was immediately taken down and the body removed from it. The body was then taken to a burial vault owned by Yousef of Arimathea, which had been built for the care of his family; and being a wealthy man it was an elaborate and well constructed burial place. The body was placed in a special part of the tomb which had been pre-arranged for its reception, and physicians connected with the Essene Brotherhood were at hand to render every possible assistance in caring for the wounds."

Again we read on page 269:

"Just before sunrise, Yousef of Arimathea and other Essenes who had been hiding nearby approached the tomb when the guards were

trying to protect themselves from the rain under the shelter of some cattle houses slightly distant. Using the means they had previously provided, and taking advantage of the laxity of the officials in sealing the doorway properly, they caused this great stone to be thrown over, and the doorway to be opened. When they entered the tomb, they found Jesus resting easily, and rapidly regaining strength and vitality. After an hour the storm ceased sufficiently for the Essenes to escort Him from the tomb."

Similarly a writer John Noel corroborates the discovery of the tomb of Jesus in Srinagar, Kashmir, India in his article entitled, "The Heavenly High Snow Peaks of Kashmir" published in the Asia Magazine, October, 1930.

"Immensely strong are these picturesque, broad-shouldered Kashmiri peasants, and yet docile and meek in temperament. One thing about them strikes you with enormous force. They seem more perfectly Jewish than the purest Jews you have ever seen—not because they wear a flowing, cloaklike dress that conforms to your ideas of Biblical garments, but because their faces have the Jewish cast of features. The curious coincidence—or is it a coincidence?—is that there is a strong tradition in Kashmir of connection with the Jews. For a good many years there have been afloat in this land rumors that Christ did not really die upon the cross but was let down and disappeared to seek lost tribes, and that he came to Kashmir, Ladak and Little Tibet and died and was buried in Srinagar. Kashmir legend, I have been told, contains references to a prophet who lived here and taught, as Jesus did, by "parables"—little stories that are repeated in Kashmir to the present day. Of recent years certain explorers have also come upon traces of this story of the sojourn of Jesus in these regions. In one version of the story he is said to have come to confer and argue with the Buddhist monks on the doctrine of reincarnation during the years of his young manhood, the period of which there is no Biblical record in regard to his whereabouts."

The man who persistently appeals to the best side of his fellows is rarely disappointed.—

Western Writers on Islam

"It (the strength of Islam) lies in the fact that Islam is a religion which has enabled men, by a simple scheme of theology, to live religious lives. No religion could maintain its hold upon millions of people, as Islam does, were it not able to meet some human needs. Islam in proclaiming the unity and greatness of God was putting forth an idea that grew in the minds of men into a profound conviction. The simplicity of it appealed to them as an immense relief from the complexity of mediaeval Christian teaching with its priestly offices, saint worship and its labyrinth of theological difficulties; it won its way in polytheistic lands, such as Africa, by its very insistence that there is but one God. Moslems have never tired of reiterating that God is one, God is great and He is a God of judgment. These truths are not peculiar to Islam, for a Christian can subscribe to them all, but they represent the essence of all Moslem teaching about God. Much in Moslem Theology is purely theoretical and its interest is confined to students of Koranic law, but the thought of God as the one governor of the universe, as a personal force in the lives of men, and as one who has direct individual dealings with them, is a fact of life, not a theory. It provides an explanation for many of the problems of life, and those who grasp its significance it enables to face loss, suffering, trouble and adversity with complete resignation . . . It is in the study of this aspect of Islam that we begin to understand why Islam not only made converts but held them, why in days when there was no compulsion or pressure Moslems spread their faith and won people from many races, of differing religions and of widely varying outlooks. They sought to make the unity of God a reality in the experience of men. They met Christianity at a time when men were dominated by a priestcraft which appeared to many to deny the right of direct access to God. If a man were burdened with sins he had to repair to a priest for absolution. Islam came preaching that God was accessible to all. He required no saintly intercessors, and the humblest might approach Him and seek His mercy.

"In trying to sum up the reasons for the expansion of Islam I would place next in order the devotion and loyalty to the Prophet universally shown by Moslems of every race . . . When Ayesha was asked about the Prophet she said:

"He was a man just such as yourselves. He laughed often and smiled much. He would mend his clothes and cobble his shoes. He used to help me in my household duties, but what he did oftenest was to sew. He never took revenge excepting where the honour of God was concerned. When angry with any person he would say, 'What hath taken such a man that he should soil his forehead in the mud?' "

"This is the picture of a very human man who by his personality won the affection of the Arabs. Armies advanced to battle under the inspiration of a man who had taught them a great truth about God, who had been prepared to suffer persecution for his faith, and who as one of themselves understood their needs, aspirations and hopes.

"It naturally follows from what has been said that another source of strength in Mohammedanism is the Moslem's pride in his religion. We have seen what this means in pagan African areas where the prayer mat ostentatiously displayed gives the Moslem the opportunity of public worship which at the same time is an object lesson to the outlookers. This is not done from any desire for display or "to be seen by men", but from an entire absence of self-consciousness in prayer and a pride of faith which makes a man never ashamed to own and confess it even when he knows that those watching him are not believers. Enthusiasm is always infectious, and the Christian world met in Islam a body of people wildly enthusiastic for their religion. The ringing note of reality that must have met Christian populations weakened by schism, inert through ignorance and priestly rule, and often exploited by the wealthy few was a challenge to the Church. The struggle between the two faiths was one of vitality, and in pre-Reformation days Islam won practically every time because it stood for personal religion, which was the heritage of all." (The Expansion of Islam by W. Wilson Cash)

... "Nor as to the effects of Islam when first embraced by an African tribe can there be any reasonable doubt. Polytheism disappears almost instantaneously; sorcery, with its attendant evils, gradually dies away; human sacrifice becomes a thing of the past. The general moral elevation is most marked; the natives begin for the first time in their history to dress, and that neatly. Squalid filth is replaced by a scrupulous cleanliness; hospitality becomes a religious duty; drunkenness, in-

stead of the rule, becomes a comparatively rare exception. Though polygamy is allowed by the Koran, it is not common in practice, and, beyond the limits laid down by the Prophet, incontinence is rare; chastity is looked upon as one of the highest, and becomes, in fact, one of the commoner virtues. It is idleness henceforward that degrades, and industry that elevates, instead of the reverse. Offences were henceforward measured by a written code instead of arbitrary caprice of a chieftain—a step, as everyone will admit, of vast importance in the progress of a tribe. The mosque gives an idea of architecture at all events higher than any negro has yet had. A thirst for literature is created, and that for works of science and philosophy as well as for commentaries on the Koran.”

“It is melancholy to contrast with these wide-spread beneficial influences of Mohammedanism the little that has been done for Africa till very lately by the Christian nations that have settled in it, and the still narrower limits within which it has been confined. Till a few years ago the good effects produced beyond the immediate territories occupied by them were absolutely nothing. The achievement of Vasco de Gama, for which Te Deums were sung in Europe, proved for centuries to be nothing but the direst curse to Africa. If the oceanic slave-trade has been, to the eternal credit of England in particular, at last abolished by Christian nations, it cannot be forgotten that Africa owes also to them its origin, and on the West Coast, at all events its long continuance. The message that European traders had carried for centuries to Africa has been one of rapacity, of cruelty, and of bad faith. It is a remark of Dr. Livingstone’s that the only art that the natives of Africa have acquired from their five hundred years’ acquaintance with the Portuguese has been the art of distilling spirits from a gun-barrel; and that the only permanent belief they owe to them is the belief that man may sell his brother man; for this, he says emphatically, is not a native belief, but is only to be found in the track of the Portuguese. The stopping of the oceanic slave-trade by England is an enormous benefit to Africa; but, if we except the small number of converts made within the limits of their settlements, it has been the only benefit conferred by Europeans. The extension of African commerce is of more than doubtful benefit at present. The chief articles that we export from thence are the produce of slave-labor, and, what is worse, of a vastly extended

slave-trade, in the inaccessible interior."

. . . . "Truly, if the question must be put, whether it is Moham-
medan or Christian nations that have as yet done most for Africa, the
answer must be that it is not the Christian. And if it be asked, again,
*not what religion is the purest in itself and ideally the best — for to this
there could be but one answer* (Italics are mine—Ed.)—but which, un-
der the peculiar circumstances — historical, geographical, and ethnolog-
ical — is the religion most likely to get hold on a vast scale of the na-
tive mind, and so in some measure to elevate the savage character, the
same answer must be returned. The question is, indeed, already half
answered by a glance at the map of Africa. Mohammedanism has al-
ready leavened almost the whole of Africa to within five degrees of the
equator; and, to the south of it, Uganda, the most civilized state in that
part of Central Africa, has just become Mohammedan." (Mohammad &
Mohammadanism by R. Bosworth-Smith, pg. 59-61.)

Comments and Appreciation

"The Moslem Sunrise, a quarterly journal, edited by Sufi Mutiur Rahman Bengalee, M. A., the Missionary of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam, is an excellent organ of the Moslem Cause in this country. Its aims and ideals are highly spiritual, and it seeks to establish peace through the world. The journal is published from Chicago, Illinois at 56 East Congress Street, Suite 1307".

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* * *

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Miss Leo Morris, Atlanta, Georgia.

TO OUR READERS

By the help of Allah, we publish another issue of the Moslem Sunrise which is a double number, containing two magazines under one cover. As stated before, during this unprecedented economic crisis, we will have to continue this policy until conditions improve.

Attention is drawn to the fact that subscriptions of a good number of friends have fallen in arrears and it is earnestly requested that they will do well to send in their new subscriptions at an early date.

We are deeply and sincerely grateful to the donors for the Moslem Sunrise. It is an eloquent testimony of the genuine sincerity of the American Moslems and their spirit of sacrifice for the cause of Truth. With fervent prayers that Allah may bless them abundantly, here and hereafter, we publish below the names of all the donors.

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